

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PRAGUE 02019 131507Z

63

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

OMB-01 EB-07 TRSE-00 SIL-01 LAB-04 /073 W

----- 124517

R 131416Z

FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 622

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 2019

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, PINT, CZ

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S COURTESY CALL ON MFA VICE MINISTER SPACIL

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: MY JULY 12 COURTESY CALL ON MFA VICE MINISTER SPACIL LARGELY CONCERNED PROSPECTS OF AN EARLY APPOINTMENT WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER, THE EMBASSY'S PROBLEM IN MAKING CONTACTS WITH CZECHOSLOVAK GOVERNMENT AND PARTY OFFICIALS, AND SPACIL'S PENDING VISIT TO WASHINGTON FOR CONSULTATIONS. END SUMMARY

2. AT OUTSET OF MY JULY 12 COURTESY CALL, MFA VICE MINISTER SPACIL OFFERED A CUP OF TEA AND SAID "LETS GET DOWN TO BUSINESS." HE WAS FORTIFIED WITH A NOTE TAKER. I REMINDED HIM THAT THIS WAS A COURTESY CALL AND THAT I WAS NOT WILLING, THEREFORE, TO DISCUSS MATTERS OF SUBSTANCE. I THOUGHT IT PROPER TO BEGIN DISCUSSION OF SUBSTANCE ONLY AFTER I HAD THE CHANCE TO DO SO FIRST WITH FOREIGN MINISTER CHNOUPEK. INDEED AN APPOINTMENT HAD BEEN
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PRAGUE 02019 131507Z

ALREADY REQUESTED FOR THIS PURPOSE. THUS, IF THE VICE MINISTER HAD SOMETHING OF SUBSTANCE TO SAY I WOULD LISTEN BUT WOULD NOT NECESSARILY REPLY.

3. TO THIS SPACIL REPLIED THAT I WAS OUT OF LUCK, GIVEN CHNOUPEK'S VACATION SCHEDULE AND ROUND OF MEETINGS (TO INCLUDE ICELANDIC AND NORWEIGIAN FOREIGN MINISTERS), HE WOULD NOT HAVE TIME TO SEE ME BEFORE OCTOBER. I TOLD SPACIL THAT IF THAT WAS THEIR LEVEL OF PRIORITIES, I WOULD BE PREPARED TO SIT IT OUT UNTIL OCTOBER.

4. WITH THIS SPACIL CREATED A LARGE OPENING BY ASKING HOW I WAS ENJOYING CZECHOSLOVAKIA. I TOLD HIM IT WOULD BE MORE ENJOYABLE IF I COULD MEET MORE PEOPLE; AS AN INSTANCE I MENTIONED HOW, DURING THE RECENT TRIP OF DIPLOMATIC HEADS OF MISSION TO OSTRAVA, THE DIRECTOR OF THE TATRA TRUCK ASSEMBLY PLANT OFFERED TO MAKE ANY SPECIAL INDIVIDUAL ARRANGEMENT. I THEN REQUESTED CHIEF OF PROTOCOL (CERNIK) TO ARRANGE MEETING WITH A TATRA TRADE UNION OFFICIAL. AFTER CONSULTATION CERNIK REPLIED THAT A LUNCHEON WAS ARRANGED THAT DAY, BUT IT SO HAPPENED THAT NO LUNCHEON MEETING RESULTED. TO THIS SPACIL REPLIED THAT IT WAS PROBABLY ONLY A CASE OF SOMEONE FORGETTING. I TOLD HIM THAT I HOPED THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE ANY MORE FORGETTING; MOREOVER THE PROBLEMS OF CONTACTS AFFECTED NOT ONLY ME BUT MY STAFF, WHICH WISHES TO MEET WITH MFA REGIONAL BUREAU MEMBERS AND OTHER OFFICIALS. SPACIL COUNTERED THAT HE HAD TOLD JACK PERRY MONTHS AGO THAT THE EMBASSY SHOULD FEEL FREE TO MEET MFA OFFICIALS. WHEN I SAID THAT THAT OBVIOUSLY HAD NOT WORKED HE TOLD ME THAT ANY PROBLEMS ON THIS SCORE SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO HIM IMMEDIATELY. I EXPRESSED MY APPRECIATION AND NOTED THAT THE EMBASSY WOULD TAKE HIM UP ON THIS VERY SOON.

5. I ADDED THAT WE ALSO WISHED TO MEET PEOPLE FROM WITHIN THE COMMUNIST PARTY. SPACIL RETORTED THAT, AS I KNEW, CZECHOSLOVAKIA HAD A DIFFERENT SYSTEM THAN THE U.S. WITH ITS OWN SET OF RULES, SO THAT INTERNAL MATTERS WERE NOT A DIPLOMATIC CONCERN. HE FELT, HOWEVER, THAT OUR EMBASSY HAD SUFFICIENT CONTACTS. I ALLOWED THAT I MUST HAVE RECEIVED A MISTAKEN IMPRESSION AFTER CREDENTIAL CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PRAGUE 02019 131507Z

PRESENTATION CEREMONY WHEN PRESIDENT HUSAK PROMISED MYSELF AND STAFF FREE ACCESS TO CONTACTS (PRAGUE 1829). I ADDED THAT WE HAD BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO DISCUSSING THE BERLIN ECPC WITH SOMEONE IN THE PARTY. SPACIL PROTESTED THAT THAT WAS AN INTERNAL MATTER BUT BACKED OFF SOMEWHAT WHEN I EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT SUBJECTS OF DETENTE AND PEACE WERE INTERNAL MATTERS.

6. I GAVE AS A GOOD AND RECENT EXAMPLE OF THE MINISTRY'S BAD COOPERATION OUR LETTER TO PROTOCOL DATED JUNE 14 REQUESTING APPOINTMENTS A MONTH IN ADVANCE FOR OUR AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE AND OFFICIAL VISITOR. THE EMBASSY HAD TO WAIT SO LONG FOR A REPLY THAT WE WERE ON THE BRINK OF TELLING THE VISITOR NOT TO COME. SPACIL BLAMED IT ALL ON BUREAUCRATIC FOULUPS. I PROTESTED THAT SUCH FOULUPS SEEMED TO HAPPEN ALL THE TIME. SPACIL PROMISED THAT IN THE FUTURE OUR REQUESTS FOR APPOINTMENTS WOULD GO RIGHT THROUGH.

7. ON THE SUBJECT OF HIS CONSULTATION TRIP TO THE UNITED STATES, AGREED UPON DURING THE OCTOBER VISIT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN TO PRAGUE, SPACIL INDICATED THAT HE WAS FLEXIBLE CONCERNING TIMING. IF WASHINGTON WANTED HIM BEFORE ELECTIONS, OR IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARD, HE WOULD BE WILLING TO GO. HOWEVER, HE CONSIDERED THE BEST TIME WOULD BE AFTER THE INSTALLATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION. I ALLOWED THAT THIS WAS PROBABLY THE WISEST COURSE. HE WAS ANXIOUS TO ASCERTAIN FOR HIS PLANNING PURPOSES IF THE DEPARTMENT INTENDED TO EXTEND AN INVITATION THIS YEAR.

8. COMMENT: MEETING WAS OBVIOUSLY ATTEMPT BY SPACIL TO MANEUVER ME INTO BUSINESS DISCUSSION WITH HIM IN LIEU OF MEETING I HAD REQUESTED WITH FOREIGN MINISTER CHNOUPEK. CONCERNING APPOINTMENTS, EMBASSY HAS FOLLOWED UP BY REQUESTING MEETING WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS DEALING WITH CEMA CONFERENCE JUST ENDED IN BERLIN. SO FAR THE RECORD HAS NOT BEEN GOOD AND MANY OF THE EMBASSY'S LETTERS REQUESTING APPOINTMENTS HAVE EVEN GONE UNANSWERED.

9. I SUSPECT WE SHALL PROBABLY OBTAIN APPOINTMENT TO SEE FOREIGN MINISTER CHNOUPEK BEFORE OCTOBER ESTIMATE GIVEN
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 PRAGUE 02019 131507Z

BY SPACIL. IT IS NOT IN THEIR INTERESTS TO DELAY THE MEETING AND SPACIL PROBABLY REALIZES THE SAME, AS HE NEVER MENTIONED IN INTERVIEW HIS DISAPPOINTMENT, OF TREPEATED HERE, OF BEING THREE YEARS AS AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON WITHOUT RECEIVING APPOINTMENT WITH SECRETARY OF STATE.

10. WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENTS VIEWS CONCERNING TIMING OF SPACIL TRIP (SEE PARA 7 ABOVE).
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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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